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Population and Globalization

Preface

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The connections between population and globalization are pervasive and important. International labor migration provides a paradigmatic example of such connections, but the links between demography and globalization are broader and deeper than this example might suggest. The major components of demographic change—fertility, mortality, and migration—have been greatly influenced by global forces throughout history. In some instances, such as with the spread of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, globalization has abetted tragedy. In other instances, such as with the improvements of reproductive health services, immunization programs, and many other public health measures, globalization has facilitated rapid improvements in the human condition in both rich and poor countries.

Conversely, the pace and nature of globalization have also been influenced by demographic change. Demographic divergence between the developing and the developed worlds has provided an important incentive for trade, foreign investment, and international capital flows. As populations age during the coming decades and as the demographic center of gravity shifts increasingly toward Asia and the developing world, these changes will continue to influence globalization.

This special volume of *Southeast Asian Studies* addresses these and other issues. Most of the articles are drawn from the 2002 IUSSP Regional Population Conference, Southeast Asia's Population in a Changing Asian Context, held in Bangkok, Thailand, June 10–13, 2002. The conference was a collaborative effort of the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population and the College of Population Studies, Chulalongkorn University.

The first article, "Population and Globalization," by Sumner J. La Croix, Andrew

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Mason, and Abe Shigeyuki, can be regarded as a position paper for this special issue. It discusses how globalization has affected demographic trends on the one hand and how demographic trends have affected globalization on the other. The authors focus on developments over the past 200 years and emphasize “economic globalization” —the integration of product, capital, and labor markets and the rapid diffusion of technology and information across borders. On the basis of their review of demographic trends over that extended period of time, they conclude that the global demographic transition is still incomplete. Continuation of the mortality revolution in the developing world will likely depend to a considerable extent on the ability of developing countries to put institutions in place that facilitate the transmission and acceptance of public health knowledge and new medical practices. The adoption of social institutions that facilitate information transmission and allow adaptation to changing circumstances is the critical element. The vital task for any society is to get the institutions right. Otherwise, globalization and demography can interact to produce large populations living in poverty.

Matthew Higgins and Jeffrey G. Williamson contributed the second article, “Explaining Inequality the World Round: Cohort Size, Kuznets Curves, and Openness.” It is an empirical analysis of relationships between inequality, development, and demography. The authors explore three hypotheses regarding sources of inequality: (1) the effect of demographic conditions (cohort size), (2) the effect of development (Kuznets Curve), and (3) the effect of globalization (degree of openness in trade and migration). Using Deininger and Squire’s inequality database, they have tested these hypotheses while allowing for the effects of other variables suggested by the literature.

The empirical results provide strong support for demographic effects on inequality the world round: large mature working-age cohorts are associated with lower aggregate inequality, and large young-adult cohorts are associated with higher aggregate inequality. In addition, the analysis reports strong evidence that inequality follows the Kuznets’ inverted-U pattern, tending to rise as low-income countries grow, and tending to fall as medium-income countries grow. It should be stressed that this work differs from most previous studies of the Kuznets hypothesis, as it examines the inequality-development relationship conditional on other variables. Finally, the authors extend their analysis to clarify its implications for the recent debate about rising wage inequality in the United States and other OECD economies in the 1980s. They find little support for the hypothesis that a policy commitment to globalization has an impact on inequality.

Thus the first two articles discuss general issues. The following four articles deal with more country- or region-specific and issue-oriented analyses, or case studies. The first of these is “Employment Transitions in an Era of Change in Thailand,” by Soumya Alva and Barbara Entwisle. This article considers the implications of globalization in Thailand from a rural perspective by examining both the direct impact on employment of rural residents who migrate to urban areas and the indirect impact on rural residents through the experiences of urban migrants. Within this framework, they consider

whether men and women have similar migration and associated employment outcomes, and whether those outcomes vary by changes in the individual's stage in the life course. They discuss the factors influencing some individuals to remain employed in Nang Rong, while others migrate, either permanently or temporarily, to urban areas. They compare categories based on sector of employment, including individuals not employed, to examine these questions. Their research reveals some interesting patterns, such as the growing trend of nonagricultural employment in both urban and rural areas, which validates their hypothesis that recent macroeconomic changes in Thailand have penetrated rural areas as well as urban ones. They provide further confirmation for the trends revealed by the cohort analysis mentioned above.

Tsuya Noriko O. and Napaporn Chayovan's article, "The Economic Crisis and Desires for Children and Marriage in Thailand," examines the relationships between young Thai women's and men's experiences of economic difficulties due to the economic crisis and their desires for marriage and children. They use data from a recent national survey on the economic crisis and demographic and family dynamics. This study shows that the experiences of economic hardships due to the crisis were widespread among Thai women and men in their 20s and 30s, although there were considerable gender, regional, and urban-rural differences in the extent of such hardships. The multivariate analyses reveal that the effects of the crisis on desires for children and marriage were diverse and indirect. The authors found that husbands' hardship reduced the desired fertility of married women aged 25–39. In other words, a husband's employment is a major factor in determining a woman's perception of the financial feasibility of having children. This finding leads to their assertion that the crisis, if prolonged, may result in lower marital fertility in Thailand. Marriage desires of young unmarried women aged 20–34 have been dampened not by their own hardships but by their mothers' economic difficulties. This suggests that the widely documented close emotional ties between mothers and daughters in Thailand may have played a role in their marriage and fertility decisions.

In his article, "Unauthorized Migrants as Global Workers in the ASEAN Region," Graziano Battistella reports that, although globalization is an inevitable process and widespread, labor is not free to move where productivity is highest. Unauthorized migration has been found in all countries, however. This article explores three migration subsystems in the Asian region characterized by various types of population flows. The loci of the three migration subsystems are the Malay Peninsula (including Singapore), the Brunei-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines East ASEAN Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA), and the Northern ASEAN countries. The article first examines the current trends in migration flows. It then examines the characteristics of unauthorized migration and the significance of these characteristics for regional relations. Finally, the article explores the following questions: Is the large unauthorized migration in the region a consequence of the characteristics of the regional process adopted in ASEAN? Is unauthorized migration the result of increasing globalization or does it depend on other factors? Are migration

policies consistent with regional and globalization policies?

Battistella reaches the following conclusions. On the one hand, migrants are a by-product of globalization, which disrupts national labor markets and redirects workers to internationalized labor markets; on the other hand, migrants are excluded from the benefits of globalization, as they are not free to move where productivity is higher. Unauthorized migration can be considered to be the response of workers to the regulation of manpower, which during the process of globalization remains strictly local. The ultimate solution, deregulating migration in favor of the free circulation of labor, may appear utopian now. But the economic integration envisaged in ASEAN cannot be successful until migrant labor is factored into it.

Ching-lung Tsay concentrates upon a more specific migration problem in his article, "Labor Migration and Regional Changes in East Asia: Outflows of Thai Workers to Taiwan." Since the early 1980s the migration of workers across borders has become an increasingly controversial issue. In fact, Japan, the Asian NIEs (South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore) and Malaysia and Thailand have begun to absorb growing numbers of workers from other countries at earlier stages of demographic and economic transitions. This article investigates the existing migration systems between Thailand and the destination countries in East Asia. The focus is upon the migrant flows to Taiwan before and after the legalization of labor importation there in the early 1990s. The labor market segments into which Thai workers were recruited are identified and their earnings as well as working and living conditions in Taiwan are explored. The research also specifies the costs and benefits of labor exports for Thailand, since this issue appears to be particularly crucial in light of the 1997 economic crisis. On the one hand, it has to be expected that the prospects of working abroad may not be so promising now that the Asian economies are slowing down. On the other hand, the Thai government is interested in sending more laborers overseas in response to economic pressures at home. This research has important policy implications for both Thailand and Taiwan.

The last section of this issue consists of a report of the panel at the final plenary session of the 2002 IUSSP Regional Population Conference on Southeast Asia's Population in a Changing Asian Context. It summarizes a discussion entitled "Does Globalization Adversely Affect Population and Poverty? The Views of Five Panelists." The panel provides a concluding general discussion that addresses the effects of globalization on population and poverty. Richard Leete of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) organized and chaired the session. Two panel members, Andrew Mason and Simeen Mahmud, agreed to stimulate debate by presenting the case that globalization *was not* adversely affecting population and poverty. The other two panelists, Ogawa Naohiro and Rafiqul Huda Chaudhury, presented the case that globalization *was* adversely affecting population and poverty. Each of the panel members was asked to summarize the views presented at the forum. We hope that readers will find the panel discussion provocative and interesting.

Finally, we would like to express our appreciation to the members of the International Organizing Committee and its chair, Mercedes Concepcion, to the National Organizing Committee, and to the conference coordinator, Pivan Prachuabmoh. We would also like to acknowledge the financial support of the Globalization Research Center of the University of Hawaii and the East-West Center. Special thanks go to Ms. Sandra Ward for her superb editorial work. Lan Chen and Ann Takeyasu, both of the East-West Center, provided outstanding editorial assistance, and Neil Jamieson, at the Center for Southeast Asian Studies, assisted greatly in editing this issue.